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Design Policy Mapping in Europe

The following content is drawn from the “Design Policy Mapping in Europe” report. Access and download the complete report using the link:

https://madres.beda.org/en/publications/design-policy-mapping-in-europe/

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Sep 2025

Country Profile: Sweden

Country Size: 438,574 sq km
Citizens: 10,551,707 (2024) | Tendency: rising
GDP per Capita: 57,723.2 $ (2024) | Tendency: rising
EU Innovation Scoreboard: Innovation Leader (2025) | 155,5%
BEDA Member Organisations: Swedish Design Society

Dedicated design policy status

Sweden does not have a dedicated design policy, but the *Policy for Designed Living Environment* (2018) which serves as a comprehensive framework for architecture, design, art, and cultural heritage, aiming to create sustainable, inclusive and high-quality living environments.

Design in other policy agendas

- → **CCI Strategy** – New Strategy for Businesses in the Cultural and Creative Industries 2024–2033 reiterates the national goal for architecture, form, and design, stating:"Strategically used design processes are an important tool for improving everything from the public sector's ability to deliver services to the competitiveness of companies and also for reducing the climate impact of products." [Championed]
- → **Innovation Strategy** – *Research and Innovation Strategy (2024)* mentions design indirectly by establishing an office to facilitate innovation in/with creative industries. [Mentioned]
- → **Industrial / development strategy** – *Strategy for Trade, Investment and Global Competitiveness (2024)* highlights "design-driven innovation" as a national strength and signals concrete ambitions: to act as a test market for sustainable, design-driven solutions and to provide high-quality support to businesses within cultural and creative sectors (including design). The strategy links design to export promotion, green transition pilots and targeted sectoral support — putting design into industrial policy levers (markets, pilots, export). [Championed]
- → **Circular Economy Strategy** – *Circular Economy Action Plan (2021)* mentions better product design and eco-design. [Championed]
- → **Architecture Strategy** – *Policy for Designed Living Environment (2018)* covers architecture, design, and cultural heritage, promoting sustainable, accessible, and aesthetically considered environments. [Championed]

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→ **Digital Strategy** – No strategy or references to design were identified. [Overlooked]

Observations

Sweden demonstrates one of the most structured approaches to embedding design in policy, with strong cultural and architectural frameworks complemented by industrial and sustainability strategies. The Policy for Designed Living Environment provides a systemic foundation (though focused on built environment), while trade and competitiveness strategies position design as a driver of innovation and sustainability. However, there is a significant potential to build on this foundation by deepening integration in digital and innovation agendas.

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